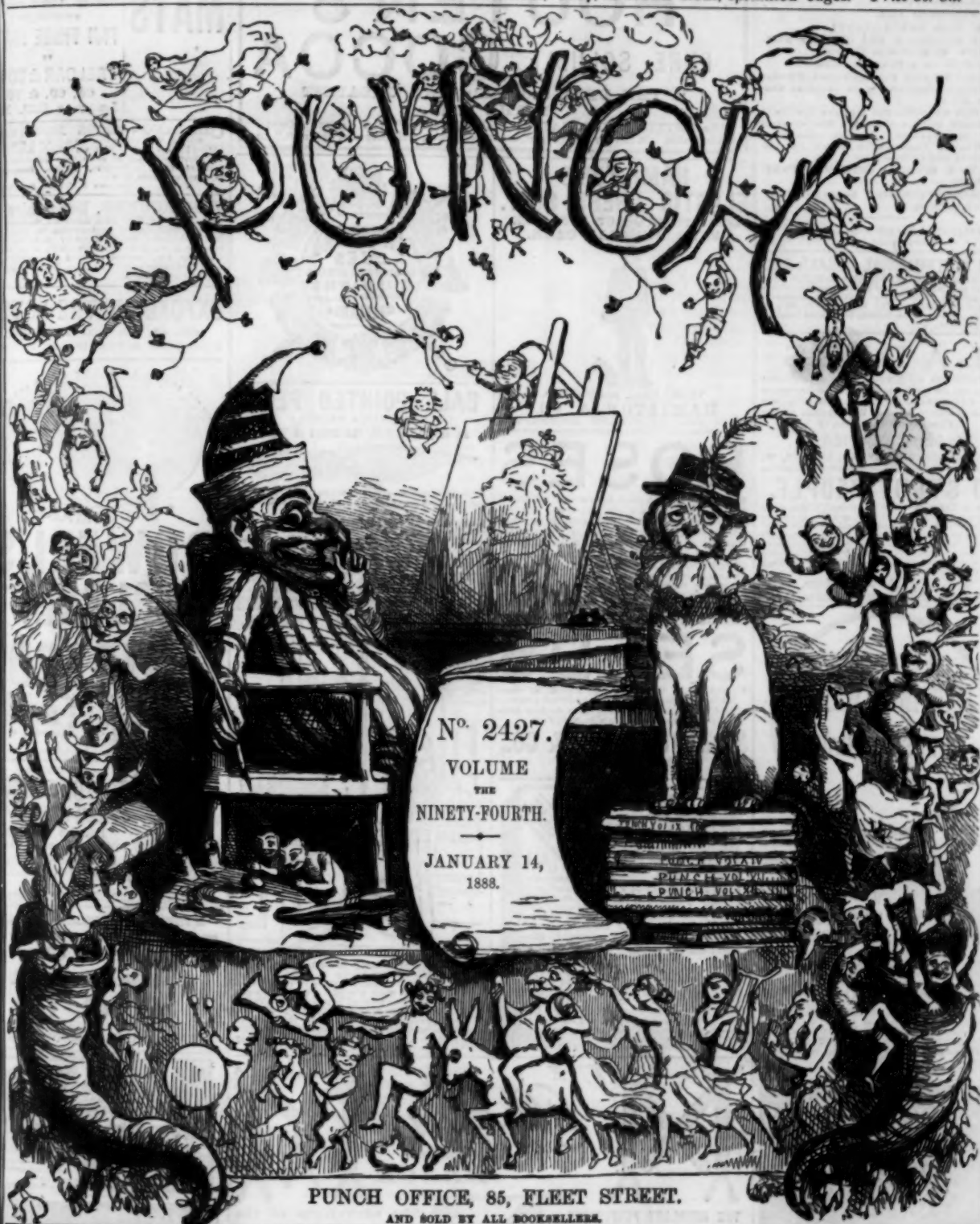


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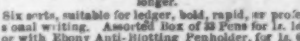


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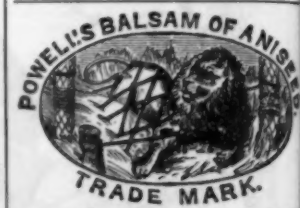
Strand, W.C.—The Council earnestly appeal for
DONATIONS and ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.
A deficit, estimated at more than £200, has to be
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THE LETTER-BAG OF TOBY. M.P.

FROM YOUNG ENGLAND.

Belvoir, Saturday.



EAR TOBY,

I SEE by the papers that I am again on the point of retiring from public life in order to make way for someone. I forget who it is this time, which is a misfortune, as that is the only touch of novelty in the situation. Man and boy, for the last fifteen years, I have, according to the newspapers, been on the point of retiring. Yet here I am, Member for Melton, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Vice-President of the Committee of the Council on Agriculture. As ASHB-RNE says, I am "always Melton but never disappear." That I understand is a joke, and goes better with the assistance of ASHB-RNE's mellifluous vocal delivery.

But why should I retire more than any other of the younger Members of the Ministry? I own I am no longer as young as I was, but few of us are. Nature has been perhaps unkindly lavish in endowing me with a venerable appearance. But I am still as young in heart and mind as I was when I used to walk arm in arm with DIZZY to call on Lady BL-S-NGT-W. How well I remember his ringlets redolent with thy incomparable oil, O Macassar! his tasselled cane and his waistcoat festooned with chains of gold! I was a mere lad compared with him, and so was GEORGE SM-THE. But we both adored him, and I remember quite well one night SM-THE trying to curl my hair like his. Only the other day I came upon a letter written by my father to Lord STR-NGT-RD, SM-THE's Papa. It is nearly forty-four years old, but I remember all about the time, though of course I was not aware that my father and Lord STR-NGT-RD were in correspondence on the subject. The Manchester Athenæum was just going to be opened, and DIZZY had been asked to deliver an inaugural address. SM-THE and I were going down in his train, and our dear old fathers shook their heads. My father wrote in his stately way to Lord STR-NGT-RD: "I deplore as much as you do the influence which Mr. D-SR-LI has acquired over many of our young legislators, particularly over your son and over mine. I have no personal knowledge of Mr. D-SR-LI, and I have not an entire respect for his talents, of which I think he might make a better use. It is regrettable that two young men like JOHN and Mr. SM-THE should allow themselves to be led away by a man of whose straightforwardness I have the same opinion as yourself,—as I can only judge of it by his public career. The excellent dispositions of our sons render them only too susceptible to the seductions of an artful mind."

Ah me! the days that are no more? Doesn't that last sentence hit us all three off? The too susceptible youngsters, the mature young man, oiled and curled like an Assyrian bull, and the alert artfulness under the magnificent calmness of his pompous manner. But, really, I am convicting myself of that old age which my enemies accuse me of. I remember how garrulous H-GHT-W got in his old days, and so did BR-GH-M and R-S-LL, sitting at the Scian Gate, always piping about old times—

Chiefs who no more in bloody fight engage,
But, wise through time and narrative with age,
In summer days like grasshoppers rejoice.

I must fight against the tendency, and shall be truly obliged if you will not hesitate to give me a hint if you find me erring in that direction, either in correspondence or conversation.

But I was saying, why should I retire more than ST-N-L-Y, or CR-BER-K, or CR-S, or, indeed, G-ROY H-M-LT-N? He was born a year or two after me, and is my junior as time is reckoned. But you know him well, and will, I venture to say, testify that he is actually an older man than I, and has been ever since he left school. He is one of the men who were never young, and I, if I may say so, am of the kind who will never be old. On the threshold of this New Year I feel as if I were only beginning my career, ready to use my present position as a spring-board for much higher flights. It is true I am on the verge of three-score years and ten. But what of that? Wasn't SHEM a hundred years old when still an active colonist? Or, not to go back so far, wasn't GL-DST-NE almost sixty before he was Prime Minister? Wasn't DIZZY sixty-three? and wasn't P-LM-NST-W, when he kissed hands on his appointment as First Lord of the Treasury, fully twelve months older than I am? and didn't he live and rule for ten years? What has been done may be done again, and I feel like doing it. I have lived through many changes, and shall see many more. Take the House of Lords for example. When I penned that deathless line which devoted to destruction our Laws, Commerce, and some other things which didn't belong to me, asking only for the salvation of Our Old Nobility, the Peerage was very differently constituted from what it is now.

You know how they count the years of some trees by the accumulated rings at their base; so I could count my age by the successive additions to the Peerage. Why I count C-L-R-DGE quite an old Peer to-day, and, when I wrote about our Old Nobility, he was plain Mr. C-L-R-DGE. CR-S and CR-BER-K, AN-RD-RE, and even SH-BER-K begin, in my mind's eye, to gather round their coronets the mistiness of respectable age. I do not doubt that I shall live to see the day when, looking round on newer batches of Peers, I shall regard as among our Old Nobility Lord ADD-NGT-W, Lord B-S-NO, and the melodiously named Lord M-GH-R-M-RNE. Till then, don't you believe any gossip you may hear about the retirement of Yours Youthfully, J-HN M-NW-BS.

HOW TO GET OUT OF IT.

THE following hints may be found useful to any shy and self-conscious person who, finding himself at the present festive season involved in a jovial family gathering that is expressing its hilarity by an indiscriminate recourse to the modern "surprise" cracker, is determined to escape the temporary humiliation of arraying himself in the paper adornment it contains.—Go through your dinner with a frown of melancholy anticipation. When the crackers are at length produced, decline to pull one.

If forced to, instantly hand over the contents to your fair neighbour who holds the other end. If these happen to be either a comic pig's head or a roomy bishop's mitre, and she asks you just to try them on, smile benignly on her, and say you "couldn't think of robbing a lady." If addressed by your hostess with, "Now, Mr. SMITH, you really must wear something!" pretend not to hear her, and tell somebody opposite, pointedly, how much you prefer "a good old-fashioned Christmas."

If the son of the house tries to bonnet you with a Turkish cocked hat, playfully pinch his legs and adroitly tearing the offending head-gear in half, laughingly observe that "you're sure it wouldn't have fitted you."

On the fun getting fast and furious, and everybody but yourself assuming some form of ornamentation, endeavour to damp it, by audibly remarking to your next-door neighbour that you "can't conceive how a set of middle-aged people can make such idiots of themselves."

If, notwithstanding this, your host determines to force your hand, and says, "Come, SMITH, put on something. Why, you're the only one of us who isn't bonneted!" get up then and there, and, giving him a bit of your mind, leave the house with an indignant flourish.

Putting By for a Rainy Day.

"Lord LEVISON, son of Earl GRANVILLE, accidentally swallowed a half-crown while doing some amateur conjuring at Walmer on Boxing Day. It is stated that up to the present he has suffered no inconvenience."—Daily Papers.

WHAT the Half-crown said to the Young Man:—"Frangas non flectes." (The family motto of the GRANVILLES.)



MR. PUNCH DRINKS THE HEALTH OF THE LATEST CENTENARIAN.

"THE APPLICATION OF IT."—Sir ROBERT BALL, in an instructive and entertaining lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, described the Moon as presenting appearances of extinct craters. "Bedad, then, Sorr," says honest PAT. "I wis'n the Moonlighters were the 'extinct craters' he spoke of."

QUITE CLEAR.—The President of the Association in the United States styled the "Knights of Labour" is accused, together with two of his coadjutors, of having misappropriated 100,000 dollars of the society's money during the past year. If this be proved, it is evident that the delinquents are "Knights errant."

A CABINET OF CURIOSITIES.

"Now, my friends," said Lord SALISBURY, taking up his pen after the usual New-Year greetings had been exchanged. "What shall we do? Has anyone a motion for the coming Session?"

"If you want an ocean," observed the LORD CHANCELLOR, "you should apply at the Admiralty."

"My good HALSBURY," remonstrated the PREMIER, "pray be serious. Recollect we have important business to transact, and if you want to be funny, reserve yourself for the House of Lords. Presiding in the Peers you are always an amusing spectacle. And now, once more, my dear colleagues, have you anything to suggest?"

"I suppose there is nothing fresh from RANDOLPH?" queried Mr. STANHOPE, who took an interest in the movements of the would-be reformer of the War Department.

"No," replied Lord SALISBURY. "I fancy he has grown tired of the idea of succeeding Prince FERDINAND in Bulgaria. It has been said that he purposes calling upon the POPE to put His Holiness right on several matters of doctrine, but nothing certain is known about his movements."

"The point is—ha! ha! ha!" guffawed the FIRST LORD of the TREASURY, liberally exhibiting the top row of his front teeth, "whether he will bother us. He! he! he! Ho! ho! ho!"

"As he is said to intend to make a lengthy stay abroad, it is more than possible that he may return to Town to-morrow," replied the PREMIER. "Sufficient for the day is—"

"The MATTHEWS thereof," put in Lord HALSBURY with a smile. "Then for the moment we need not bother ourselves about RANDOLPH."

Viscount CROSS rose from his chair, and seized the LORD CHANCELLOR's hand.

"My dear Lord," he observed, with emotion, "that is the most sensible—nay, I think I may go so far as to add, the only sensible thing you have said for months! Bless you!"

"Is it too early to consider the Budget?" asked the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.

"No," replied the PREMIER, "if any one has really any good notion for increasing the revenue without an undue sacrifice of popularity."

"Seems to me that a licence should be required for every Railway Bookstall," observed Earl CADOGAN. "This would give the Government a hold upon the circulation of treasonable or libellous pamphlets. A licence might be revoked in case of misbehaviour."

"I have every wish to agree with the Lord Privy Seal," remarked Mr. W. H. SMITH with uncustomary gravity, "but I must protest, in the name of the Press, against such an impost. Why, if every Railway Bookstall were taxed, the civilisation of the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century would be shaken to its foundation! Tax Railway Bookstalls! Stuff and nonsense!"

"You do not happen to know the name of the largest Proprietor of Railway Book-stalls?" asked Mr. MATTHEWS, the Home Secretary.

"I am not quite sure!" said the Treasury's First Lord. "It may be a Mr. BROWN, a Mr. JONES, or a Mr. SMITH, but I have a faint idea that someone has told me that the principal Railway Bookstall-keeper is a person of the name of WILLING."

"No doubt he is willing to be so," put in the LORD CHANCELLOR.

This sally caused such a loud chorus of "Resign!" that Lord SALISBURY had to interfere.

"I am sure we all would regret the loss of our excellent friend." Cries of "No! no!" "Well, we should if he gave up the habit of making pointless puns." A dead silence. "Thank you, I thought so. After this expression of opinion, my dear HALSBURY, I do hope you will turn over a new leaf, and keep any nonsense you want to publish until you are able to incorporate it in your customary abortive Lanes Bill."

There was a pause, during which the LORD CHANCELLOR, with a comical assumption of wounded dignity, left the room.



HAD HIM THERE!

Uncle Jim. "HERE'S HALF A MINCE PIE FOR YOU, TOMMY. I NEED HARDLY REMIND A PERSON OF YOUR CLASSICAL CULTURE THAT 'THE HALF IS GREATER THAN THE WHOLE!'"

Tommy. "QUITE SO, UNCLE. BUT, AS I'M NOT VERY HUNGRY, I'LL ONLY TAKE A WHOLE ONE!"

"Now, that he's gone, we can get to real business," observed Lord SALISBURY. "Well, my Lords and Gentlemen, what shall we do about Ireland?"

"Ah, to be sure," echoed all present. "What shall we do about Ireland?"

"Must do something," continued the PREMIER.

"Certainly," was the response, spoken in unison. "Must do something. Why it's the subject of the hour!"

"Perhaps you would like to see a map of Ireland, so that we could get at a glance the physical features of the country. I can easily get it." This proposal was received with enthusiasm, and Lord SALISBURY left the room for a moment. And now a strange thing happened.

When the PREMIER returned to the Council Chamber, he found it entirely empty. Every member of the Cabinet had disappeared!

"I call that shabby!" said Lord SALISBURY. "Well, I suppose Ireland must wait; but we shall have to attend to the subject—some day." And with a frown he returned to his own apartments, and only regained his habitual good temper after indulging in a long inspection of some thousands of carefully-preserved caricatures of Mr. GLADSTONE.

THE Chairman of the Conference of the National Society of Professional Musicians has been lamenting the success of the Gilbert-and-Sullivan Operas. Apparently the gentleman in question, whose name happens to be Dr. HEAP, objects to the pile the gifted Collaborateurs have been making on the score that, in the process, they have demoralised the taste of the musical public. But, though the Doctor heaps up his charges, he does not suggest any way of solving the difficulty; indeed, could he do so, and show how the British public could be made to take a permanent interest in serious opera, he would soon win the thanks of Mr. CARL ROSA, and that energetic impresario would assuredly greet him with a gleeful shout of "Heap! Heap! Heap! Hooray!"

"TEMPORA MUTANTUR."—"Why change the head?" asked the *Times*, in its startling issue on the Centenary Festival Day, Monday, January 2, quoting from the *Times* (of Times past), or *Daily Universal Register*, January 1, 1788. Quite so: "Why change the head" now? Only if a title be required, why not "*Buckle's History of Civilization*"?

A PERFECT CURE.—An impulsive gentleman, who was accustomed on frequent occasions to utter "a big, big D," determined to break himself of the habit. He reduced the big D to a little one, and for "I don't care one 'D—," he substituted "I don't care one penny,"—i.e., "1d."

NOTE ON A RECENT ELECTION.—Winchester voted Conservative before, and, in doing so again, the constituents only followed the "*Mos Majorum*."

THE HOME AND "THE HOUSE;"

Or, Darby and Joan To-day.

"An administration of the law by which the old and the helpless are removed from their children and their kindred into the workhouse, as a condition of relief . . . the refusal of out-door relief, except on the same condition, whereby a family is sold up, their home broken up, in all probability never to be reconstituted, and the whole family, old and young, charged for ever upon the rates. This condition is known at this time to be absolutely refused by an immense multitude of our suffering and deserving poor; they will endure any privation of hunger and cold rather than break up their home."—From *"A Note on Out-door Relief,"* by Cardinal Manning. *Fortnightly Review* for January, 1888.

Darby to Mr. Bumble, loquitur:—

"Come into the House!" is your cry; "it's the Law, it's the Regular Rule," And I shrink, as I always have shrunk, and you call me a stubborn old fool;



And old I am surely enough, and perhaps I am foolish, who knows? But we've borne it a weary long while, and we'll bear it, I hope, to the close.

DARBY and JOAN they call us, my foolish old woman and me, Because of our clinging together; we're sixty years wed do you see, And parting this side of the churchyard is what we can neither abide;

And all of them say it is folly, and some of them swear it is pride.

Pride! Well, we *did* know it once in our own little long-ago way, Sixty years since, Mr. BUMBLE, when I was in work, with good pay, And yonder old bedstead was new, and the eldest of seven just born, And JOAN had the light in her eyes, and a cheek like the breaking of morn.

But pride in these rubbishing rags, in our lonely half-sightless old selves, The hearth that is empty of fuel, the bareness of cupboards and shelves? Nay, nay, but it's foolish to think on; the pride that the parsons so blame, Was long ago banished by hunger, burnt out of our bosoms by shame.

But obstinate?—yes, I suppose so, for love is the stubbornest thing, The weaker they grow, our old arms, why the closer and tighter they cling. Our children are dead or are fled, I am eighty years odd and nigh blind, And—you bid us "Come into the House!" and no doubt you consider it's kind.

"Sweet Home!" we have sung in our time,—eh, JOAN, you remember, my dear?—

But that music, no doubt you will tell us, would sound like mere mockery *here*. Home! when there isn't a crumb-feast to tempt the lean scuttering mouse! Little of home-feel is here, but we doubt there'd be less in the House.

Ah, you may argue, and argue! Go argue the bird from its nest, The dog from the side of its master, the babe from its mother's warm breast. The nest may be torn, and the man may be poor, and the mother ill-clad, But the instinct that clings is too strong for the reason that rates it as mad.

I'm mad, without doubt, in your eyes; and the Poor Law, of course that is sane,

To crouch by the Union fire, nothing empty, save bosom and brain, No hunger, but that of the heart, no fear save that terror untold, That creeps at the thought of "the House" to the breast of the helpless and old:—

The fear that to you is as foolish as babyhood's dread of a ghost, To linger unloved and alone 'midst an alien uniformed host Of strangers alone and unloved, broken waifs that the world cannot miss;— You will tell us—and how shall we answer him, JOAN?—must be better than *this*!

JOAN, my JOAN, who would then be but little more mine than the dress, They would wrap round these rag-covered limbs, can we hope to make gentle-folk guess,

The terror, the tearing asunder, the wrenching from love's latest hold, The void that's more awful than hunger, the palsy more dreadful than cold?

Our friend here is getting impatient. Perhaps, were no memories ours Of the sunlight that shone on our prime, we should slink from the shadow that lours

Into any retreat. We were taxed in our prosperous days like the best, And pride would scarce stay our old feet from the road to a haven of rest.

But who calls the House such a haven? Not those who have herded therein, "Keep out of it, DABBY," they cry, "whilst a coin or a crust you can win."

Badged, brow-beaten, ranked without heed to the links of a lifetime? No, no! The road to the grave, though 'tis hard, is a road we would far rather go.

So help to the helpless must come, say our Masters, or come not at all.

A choice between heart-break and hunger for those fate has thrust to the wall.

Is that a wise Country's last word to its aged ones? Well, you have mine;

And you call me a stubborn old fool! JOAN! JOAN! be content, I decline!

No, JOAN, I am not to be taken. Be comforted, wife, I am here, [then, my dear.

We scarcely can see one another; take hold of my hand, Nay, I'm not yielding, not yet; though perhaps were you warm, and well fed—

Ah! pardon, old wife; we're together, the word that should part us unsaid.

Mr. Bumble loquitur:—

Dead! In each other's thin arms clasped close, as they wished, to the end!

Yes, I called him a stubborn old fool, and the fool wouldn't know his best friend.

Pah! but the poor are as mulish all round, as though beggars might choose.

If a voice could awake in him now, I suppose it would wake—to refuse.

Maddening, folly like this, to a mind that's official and clear! [for many a year!

Dead, in the damp, chilly den where they've huddled Whilst the Union gates are ajar, and the Union pallets are spread,

With a Poor Law shaped all for their good, and they spurned at its help, and they're dead!

Wouldn't be parted, forsooth! Could not argue them free of that scare,

With talk of indulgence for age, or of Guardians' discretion. The pair,

Like hundreds of couples, seemed crazed on the point, and persuasion was vain.

Bogey tales of the House are the creed of the credulous poor, and their bane.

DARBY and JOAN! It is dismal. What good has it done them to die, [but here, in this sty?

Clasped close, but with famine-pinched faces, together, It's folly; it's worse, it's a nuisance. And yet they look peaceful-like. Come!

They've escaped from the House, after all, and, poor fools, let us trust they're—at Home!

* With reason or without, it is commonly impossible to persuade the aged poor that they have any assurance of not being separated when once in "the House;" that the Guardians have any discretion in the matter, or, having it, are likely to use it in their favour. The old couple whom the writer has in his mind were impervious to argument on this point.—Ed.

"DOT AND GO ONE," is Mr. TOOLE's motto in reviving this effective Christmas piece, which is far from being in its dot-age. Dot and go like one o'clock it probably will, until the new piece by the Partners MERIVALE has been sufficiently rehearsed. Mr. TOOLE as *Caleb Plummer* (which in one paper's notice was misprinted "*Cable*" *Plummer*, thus giving the comedian plenty of rope) is seen to great advantage, and naturally considering that the old Dickens-Bucicault drama would draw money during the Christmas holidays, looks upon this *Dot* as a "spec."

THE THEATRICAL GOVERNING BODY.—The Board of Fire-Works.

ANOTHER RHYME.

Being a few more "Lines" offered, with Mr. Punch's compliments, to the Editor of the "Fortnightly," as some little assistance to the despairing Post Swinburne, who could only get one rhyme to "Babe."

BABE, if rhyme be none
To that bald head word
Babe, most dribbling one
Ever heard,
Right is it to stump
Up and down, in view
Of a round and plump
Thing like you?
Meet is it that rhyme
Should give you your place,
Likened dumping prime
To your face?
Could wild night cats raise
Such a howl? What sound
Like your squeal dismays
All hearts round!

None can tell in metre,
What your smile is worth,
Since swift flight grows fleetest
At your mirth.

Still, whate'er you may be,
Bald, grotesque—sublime!
"Babe" I can't like "baby"
Fit with rhyme.

"Astrolabe's" too schoolish,
"Great MACCABE's" too new,
Nigger's "gabe's" too foolish.
None will do.

Stop though! Let Baby "gyre
And gibble in the wabe."
That's it! Yields CARROLL's lyre
Rhyme for Babe!

POSTED UP.

DEAR MR. PUNCH.—I crave your sympathy and, if possible, your protection from a daily and ever-increasing nuisance that assails me. I refer to the apparently inexhaustible stream of prospectuses, circulars, stock and share lists, touting advertisements, charity applications, stock-jobbers' letters, that flows into my letter-box with every post, and which, did I not struggle against it with all my might and main, would literally overwhelm me. Now, my dear Sir, I am a plain individual, of no special notoriety, living in a quiet West End square, and my name is down in the *Court Guide*, and possibly in a local Directory.

But it happens also to be down somewhere as a holder of a few Mining Shares, and I am known to possess some Railway Stock. And this is quite enough. Forthwith, I appear to be selected as a target by the Secretary of every possible and impossible "concern" that the folly of the greedy speculator or the chicanery of the enterprising promoter sets on foot. I am showered with Prospectuses. They pour in on me literally in hundreds. Silver Mines in Mexico, Gold Mines in South Africa, Land Mortgages in Canada, all got up with enticing coloured diagrams and maps of the various "estates," "lodes," and "shafts," that are to secure me at once from 15 to 40 per cent. on my paid-up capital, to say nothing of a thousand and one ventures nearer home, in the shape of "Family Fog Signal" Companies, "Noiseless Drawing-Room Cart-wheel" Companies, "Patent Automatic Double Tooth Extracting" Companies, and I know not what other appeal to me everlastingly for my financial support.

Nor is this all. Advertising stock-jobbers, as if my whole life were one prolonged whirl of gambling in the Money Market, beset me with entreaties to forward them any amount from one to five thousand pounds in the shape of "cover" to enable them to have a free hand for me and "realise handsome profits" in some "good thing" or other that they, from special sources of information of their own, know is about to come off. Nothing can exceed the persistence and push of these last-named advertising harpies. They pester me in ever increasing shoals week after week. Then there are the endless charity applications, generally accompanied by a small novelette or some other form of brief but stirring dramatic literature, and last, but not least of all, the "circular" of the enterprising Tradesman who, in his desire to escape a swift and direct transmission to the waste-paper basket, purposely invades me in some artfully designed official guise, and by either sealing his envelope with the Royal Arms, or conspicuously printing on it some such superscription as "*On Her Majesty's Service*," or "*With the Prime Minister's Compliments*," deludes me into opening it, and for a moment becoming familiar with its touting contents—or rather, I should say *he did*, for I am on my guard now, and am fairly roused; and for the last fortnight, driven to desperation, have met the evil in the only legitimate way; viz., by consigning the whole contents of my letter-box, whenever they have been brought up to me, straightway to the fire. As a matter of fact, I have found that by so doing I have destroyed several valuable and important documents, and among them a Demand-note for Parochial Rates, a County Court Summons, a letter from an executor enclosing a large cheque, and the lease of a friend's house—the disappearance of all of which, I need scarcely say, is causing me no little inconvenience. But what is this to the triumphant sense of having for once been equal to the Prospectus-mongers! Not that I have quite done that yet, but I will yet manage to evade them.

Last Tuesday I nailed up my letter-box, and the Postman has since shovelled the hourly consignment to my house down the area. The Cook endeavoured to dispose of this yesterday, with the result of setting the kitchen chimney on fire. I have now some thoughts of suddenly leaving my house, and changing my name, or even of

emigrating, or picking a personal quarrel with the Postmaster-General. Indeed, I am on the verge of doing something desperate. But you, my dear Mr. Punch, will, I know, understand the morbid state of tension that can be induced, by the circumstances I have described, and appreciate the feelings of

Yours, despairingly, A VICTIM OF THE ADVERTISING POST.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THE XIXth Century, "this so-called Nineteenth Century," the Magazine, that is, for this month, is peculiarly interesting. Sir HENRY THOMPSON treats, sensibly and cautiously, "The Progress of Cremation," which is not yet quite the "burning question" that, later on, it is very likely to become. He exclaims in a note, "What an opportunity for a Campo Santo at Westminster!" Yes: full of BURNS' Memorials. If it has ever occurred to any readers of Mr. FREDERICK (not "FREDERICK" which would be so common, you know) HARRISON's writings to ask why this brilliant author has never produced a comedy? or why, if unable to construct a plot, has he never collaborated as a writer of comedy dialogue? The anxious



inquirer will find a satisfactory answer in the second article of this Magazine, entitled "The Two Paths," which recalls to us the palmy days of Dr. Barlow, sweetly conversing with Harry and Tommy, or the epigrammatic dialogues contained in the *Easy Lessons* by MARIA EDGEWORTH. We have one good word to say for it, and with this he himself provides us; "the word is" as the charade-players say, "Book-trotter," meaning a "Variety reader" as distinct from a student. But wouldn't "Book-skipper" be better? What cheer, Skipper! And isn't the Skipper just the person who would keep a log, and when anything remarkable was "found," wouldn't the Skipper "make a note of it," and on he skips again? Still, Book-trotter is good, and we thank FREDERICK-without-the-'k' (quite right to get rid of all superfluous letters—only why not have sacrificed the "e" and retained the "k"—thus "FREDERIK?") for teaching us the word. Yes, FREDERICK, we like book-trotting and book-trotters: agreeable, superficial, sociable persons, and usually good company. In the third essay MATT ARNOLD "goes for" SHRELEY; in the eighth, Mr. Justice STEPHEN has round number three with Professor ST. GEORGE MIVART; the Dragon always had a poor chance with St. George, though apparently the odds were on the monster. Mr. Justice wants to have the Professor up before him, and sentence him out of hand. The Professor conducts his own defence, and is able to take care of himself. A. C. SWINBURNE, who in the *Fortnightly* for January, has such a difficulty in rhyming to "babe," sends an article to *The XIXth Century*, dated from Hanwell. The locality is its explanation and excuse. Altogether, *The XIXth Century* Coach, Driver JAMES KNOWLES, makes a good start in the New Year. *A propos* of Poet SWINBURNE and Hanwell, has the lecture of some eminent medical man met his eye, treating of the melancholy end which awaits all punsters, and, if so, has he in defiance of this eminent person written this line in his *Locrine*—

"What boots it though thou plight thy word to boot?"

which the Poet clearly—that is, as clearly as possible—meant for a pun, and a bootiful one, too, he thought it. If he didn't intend a pun on the word boot, then that's quite another pair of shoes. Away to Hanwell, where perhaps I may foregather with the Jubilee BROWNING, and yet remain your devoted,

BARON DE BOOK WORMS.

TO "THE TIMES."

(Lines on the celebration of its Centenary, freely adapted from "The Hunchback.")

"I've known him since I was a child. E'en then
The morn I thought a very weary one,
That brought not Master WALTER.

Men of great skill and learning, wrote for one
Who ruled them—Master WALTER.

What was dull
A word from Master WALTER made as clear
As daylight.

Master WALTER came, and comes,
Summer and winter still, without or with
A double sheet of supplement, and still
Comes Master WALTER, as of yore, price threepence!"



LONDON IDYLS.

Algernon (the Heir). "AWFULLY KIND OF MRS. MASHAM TO GIVE US A LIFT. BUT IT WAS RATHER A SQUEEZE, EH!"
Jack the Detrimental (his Younger Brother). "YEE. BY THE WAY, TALKING OF SQUEEZES, IT STRUCK ME VERY FORCIBLY, DRIVING ALONG, THAT YOU'D GOT HOLD OF ONE OF MISS LAURA MASHAM'S HANDS!"
Algernon. "WELL, YOU MEDDLING YOUNG IDIOT! WHAT IF I HAD?"
Jack. "OH, NOTHING. ONLY I'D GOT HOLD OF THE OTHER, YOU KNOW!"

BALFOUR'S "IRREPRESSIBLE" DONKEY.

AIR.—"The King of the Cannibal Islands."

OH! have you heard—but of course you have—
 Of a curious creature, as stubborn as brave,
 An iron-heeled kicker, a buck-jumping
 knave.

Called the Irrepressible Donkey?
 The "Blondin Donkey" is full of his tricks,
 But the Irrepressible easily licks
 His Music-Hall model in capers and kicks;
 And the cleverest rider is found in a fix,
 When he sidles up to the animal's side,
 Flings o'er the saddle his legs astride,
 And rides, or rather essays to ride,

The Irrepressible Donkey.
 See him straddle, behold him rear!
 The cleverest rider may well feel fear,
 And cling to the neck, or hold on by the ear,
 Of the Irrepressible Donkey.

This mischievous "moke" is an awkward
 brute,
 And apt from the saddle to suddenly shoot
 The would-be Balaam who doesn't suit
 The Irrepressible Donkey.
 Many a Balaam that seat hath had,
 Riders good, and riders bad,
 But Tory, Liberal, Whig, or Rad,
 This dreadful donkey has driven them mad.
 FORSTER fuzzy, and BALFOUR tall,
 HICKS-BEACH, MORLEY, each and all,
 At one time or other, have had a fall
 From the Irrepressible Donkey.
 See him straddle, &c.

BALFOUR mounted as well as most,
 And some of his friends are beginning to
 boast

That he's a right RAREY, who will not be
 tost

From the Irrepressible Donkey.
 Of Donkey-riding he has the gift,
 Is up to each asinine struggle and shift,
 Can make the animal feel his heft,
 And prone on his back will never be left.
 BALFOUR, they say, is a blessed boon,
 He'll treat as the Colonel treated the coon,
 And make dance, soon, to a genteel tune,
 The Irrepressible Donkey.

See him straddle, &c.

Well, that, of course, remains to be seen;
 At present the creature is prancing, I ween;
 There still seems some "devil," and plenty
 of spleen.

In the Irrepressible Donkey.
 Round he goes with his hoofs asprawl,
 His mouth gapes wide, and his teeth aren't
 small.

With his ears laid back, and his tail to the
 wall,

He doesn't appear a nice "mount" at all.
 To brave BALFOUR and his "resolute" Chief
 'Twill be a great joy, and a real relief,

To find there's one rider does not come to grief

With the Irrepressible Donkey.
 See him straddle, and stamp, and rear!
 Look at his grinders, and twig his ear!
 He'll still want a good deal of "riding," I

fear—
 The Irrepressible Donkey!

"A SELF-EDUCATING PROFESSION."

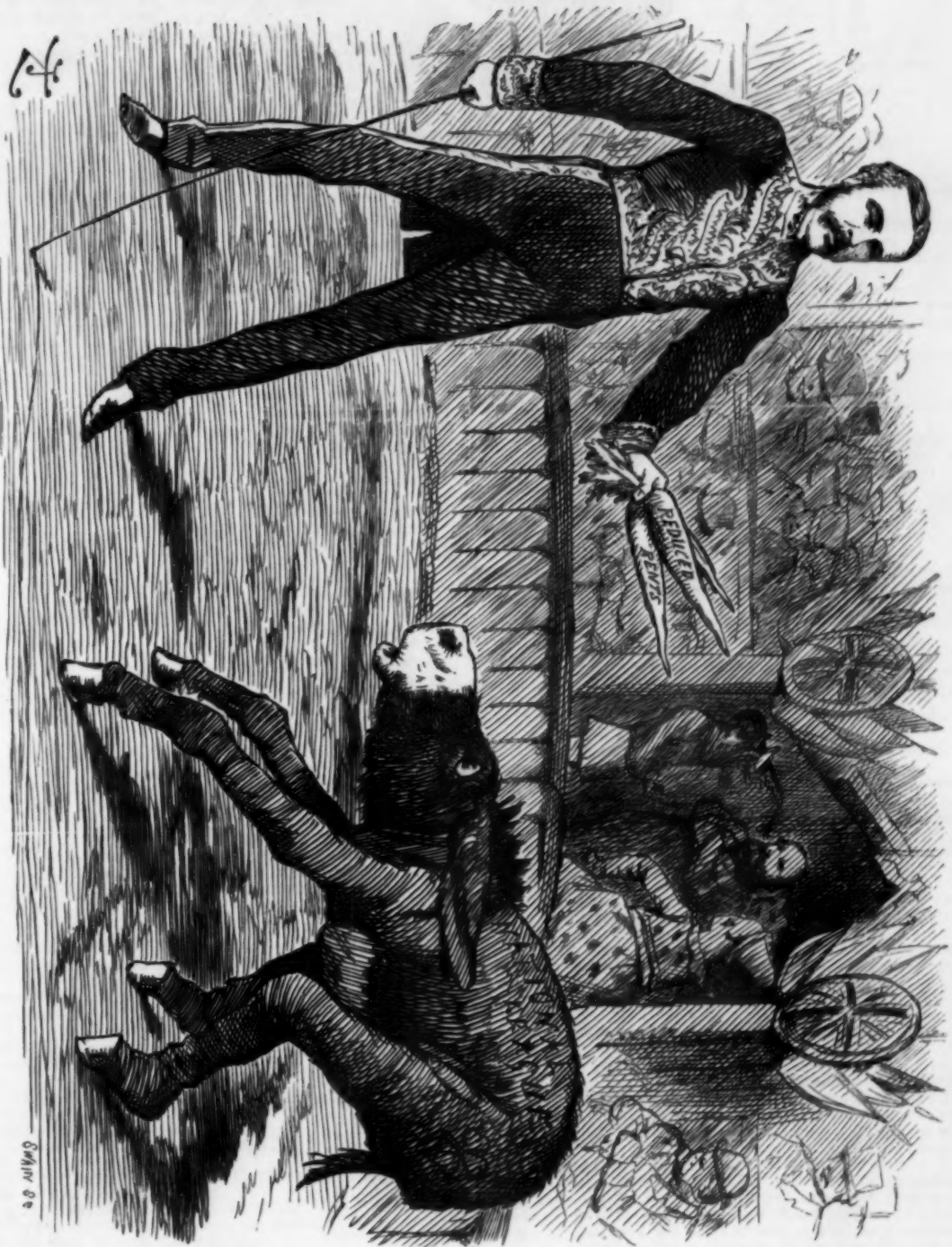
IN consequence of his distinguished success at Berlin, Mr. CHARLES WYNDHAM, will, it is probable, play *David Garrick* at St. Petersburg. The play has been already submitted to the Chief of the Detective Police, who is still engaged on attempting to discover the plot. Mr. WYNDHAM has assured the Head of the Department that there is nothing in it—meaning the plot not the head—but this sounded so like Nihilism in it, that the play will now have to undergo the severest scrutiny. Mr. CHARLES WYNDHAM will play the part in Russian. The title of the piece will be *Davidoff Garrickski*.

It is understood in certain well-informed circles that Mr. HENRY IRVING (who in spite of all reports to the contrary, is quite well, we are very glad to hear, and doing first-rate business. We always did think his business very good, especially as *Mephistopheles*, *Louis the Eleventh*, and *Mathias*) is studying Spanish and Portuguese, in order to play a round of his favourite characters at Madrid and Oporto.

Mr. TOOLE is studying Spanish in order to appear at Madrid as *Don Paulus Prios*, but Miss LINDEN has requested him to defer his engagement in the Fiji Islands for another week or two, in order to enable her to obtain a thorough mastery of the language. Some Sandwich Island men have already been sent on in advance with the board-advertisements.

"OH 'CHANGE."—Quotation for the New Year, 11 (1888).

PINCH OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.—JANUARY 11 1882.



BALFOUR'S "IRREPRESSIBLE" DONKEY.

THE SHALLABALAH MAHARAJAH;

Or The Confessions of an Indian Prince.

I'LL tell you the adventures of a Famous Indian Prince,
You needn't start as the news I impart,
I'm the Shallabalah Ma'rajah!



I've been lionised in
England, and haven't
got over it since,
For the truth to tell, a
terrible swell
Is the Shallabalah
Ma'rajah.

I'm overwhelmed with
gold, and so can while
away my time;
My suite is large, my
costumes grand, my
jewels too sublime,
And I look like HARRY
NICHOLLS in a Christ-
mas Pantomime,
And you know how,
to curtsy and bow,
To the Shallabalah
Ma'rajah.

I came to London,—
p'rhaps I'd better say
how I begun,
For no Nabob, was
half such a nob,
As the Shallabalah
Ma'rajah.

I took three spacious
Mansions and I threw
them into one,
With a door for you,
and the other two,
For the Shallabalah
Ma'rajah.

You asked me out to
dinners, and you wrote
the words "To meet

His Highness the MAHARAJAH," on your cards for the *élite*,
And you gave me much to look at, tho' there wasn't much to eat,
And a ninepenny hook, which you placed in stock,
For the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

I was carted off to Pictures, Playhouse, Party, Concert, Ball,
And ho! the rush, of extravagant gush,
For the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

And off to your House of Parliament—the greatest trial of all,
And once,—or more, you detected a snore,
From the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

Then crowds I asked to dine off Curry, Bombay Duck and Spice,
With pounds and pounds of Garlic and a ton or two of rice,—
The latter very wholesome, and most filling at the price—
And I made them drink, the pure Indian Ink,
Of the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

I got so bored of Town—I thought to get beyond your reach
Of friends—a host—suggested a coast,
For the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

So I took a row of houses with a view of sea and beach,
But the mob was shrewd, and hotly pursued,
The Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

And nobles called from Hanley, Barnsley, Leeds and Preston Pans,
With Yarmouth Trippers, Cotton-brokers, Welsh and Highland
Clans;

And a swell whose name was BUGGINS, but who called himself
BUJANS,
Who broke his brace, while bowing with grace,
To the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

I was summoned to Windsor Castle, and I thought a lot of that,
A carriage saloon, was fitted up soon,
For the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

At the Castle I was kept awaiting hours on the mat—
With an aged Peer, who adopted a sneer,
For the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

I was shown some precious tapestries, some pictures and a jar,
And then I was invested with a precious badge and star,
And the aged Peer presented me with a precious bad cigar,
With a wink of his eye, he bade a good-bye,
To the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

I've seen the glorious Million and the glorious Upper Ten,
And bear in mind, they were all of them kind,
To the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

And I've seen your splendid sailors, and your military men,
And a word of advice, I think will suffice,
From the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

I've heard you do not want to fight—by Jingo if you do?
You'd better see your guns don't burst, or bayonets break in two,
And your ironclads, should rest upon,—not under the ocean blue.
I may be wrong—but that is the song,
Of the Shallabalah Ma'rajah.

THE HOLIDAY CONVERSATION-BOOK.

ABOUT SIDENHAM.

Paterfamilias. And so, my dear children, you have been to the
Crystal Palace?

Maria. Yes, dear Papa, as you directed—third-class and carrying
in our pockets each a packet of sandwiches.

Pater. That is right, my dears. The joint spirit of economy and
self-reliance should govern our actions from our earliest years. And
now that you have seen that magnificent home of all that is beautiful
in Nature and Art, the Crystal Palace, tell me what glorious exhibit
most attracted your attention. Was it the Court of the Alhambra,
the Pompeian House, or the fine collection of plaster casts?

Johnny. Not one of the three, dear Papa,—we were most pleased
with the Pantomime.

Pater. Was it a good one?

Maria. A very good one. It was called *Robinson Crusoe*, and was
written originally by the late Mr. H. J. BYRON.

Pater. Dear me, it must have been the old Princess's Pantomime,
in which KAPINOSA appeared. He played, I remember, the part of
Friday.

Harry. Mr. D'AUBAN takes it now, Papa.

Pater. And it could not be in better hands. And now, little
GEORGE, what did you think of the ballet?

George. Booful, booful—booful ickle exter ladies.

Pater. What does the little man, mean?

Maria. I fancy, dearest Papa, that little GEORGIE wishes us to
understand that the ballet was perfect, from the *première danseuse*
down to the extra ladies.

George. 'Es—that's what ickle GEORGIE means. Booful, booful!

Pater. And the scenery?

Maria. Was charming. The dresses were also in excellent taste.
Mr. WILLIAM RIGNOLD too (who I think I have heard you say is an
excellent melodramatic actor) was capital as *King Tyranny*.

Pater. And were you pleased with the harlequinade?

James. It was not so refined as the opening. Some of the Clown's
jokes savoured more of the East than the West End.

Pater. And after seeing the Pantomime I suppose you hurried
away to revel in the treasures of Art?

Maria. That no doubt was our inclination, but it being Christmas
time, we considered it better to postpone the revel you suggest for
the moment, and as an alternative pleasure to dash into an Enter-
tainment of a Conjuror and a lady called ASTARTE.

Pater. I trust that the excellence of the show compensated for the
loss of the rich intellectual treat you apparently sacrificed in order
to attend it?

James. The Conjuror had rather a melancholy manner. I feel
that should I ever wish to see him again (which is improbable), I
would prefer to renew his acquaintance during Lent.

Pater. And, after this, I suppose you all rushed to the Egyptian
Court to inspect the interesting mural inscriptions with their vari-
coloured hieroglyphics?

Maria. No doubt we should have done this, dearest Papa, had it
not now become too dark to identify them. So we went instead to
see Mr. SNAZZELLE and some Dissolving Views, in another part of
the building.

Pater. And were you satisfied?

James. More than satisfied. We were so pleased with Mr. SNA-
ZZELLE—who appeared to us to be an admirable tragedian—and his
Dissolving Views, that it was with the utmost difficulty we tore
ourselves away from them both to catch a train. Our regret was
the more acute, as at the time of our departure Mr. SNAZZELLE,
dressed as *Mephistopheles*, was singing a modern comic song.

Pater. Well, my dears, you seem to have enjoyed yourselves
thoroughly, and as, from what you say, you appear to take more
delight in intellectual prowess than mere scenic display, you shall
all pay (the only thing you will have to pay, as admission is gratis)
a long visit on Thursday to the Museum of Practical Geology in
Jermyn Street.

Omnes. Oh, thank you, dearest Papa! That will indeed be
delightful!

THEATRICAL FIRE-FLIES.—The "Flies" of Theatres.



"FIAT EXPERIMENTUM," &C.

SCENE—A Christmas Family Gathering at a Country House.

Old Bachelor Guest (violently awakened out of his morning snooze). "WHO 'SH THERE!"
The Grandchildren (shouting in chorus, and banging at his door). "OH, MR. BULKLEY—PLEASE—MR. BULK'Y—TO GET UP—AND GO ON THE POND—'PA SAYS—'CAUSE—GRAN'MA SAYS—WE MAY—IF IT 'LL BEAR YOU—IT 'LL BEAR US!"

HUSBANDS AND HUSBANDRY.

A Specimen of the Romantic-Fiscal Fiction of the Future.

"Last year was the worst ever recorded for marriages in England. . . . What is still more remarkable is that this falling off in the wedding rate coincided with a low price of wheat. . . . The fall of the marriage rate, declares the Registrar-General, 'coincides with a decline in the value per head of British exports.'"—*Daily Telegraph*.

"O HYMEN, Hymen, reillumine thy torch!"

So sorrowfully sighed the lovely Lady PSYCHE FEATHERFLIGHT.

There had not been a wedding worth calling a wedding in England for full five years. The fashionable fancies of St. George's and St. Margaret's were as deserted as the pillared aisles of Palmyra. And the Lady PSYCHE was the unhappiest girl in all England.

She loved, in the fearless old fashion, of course,—but all fashions of love were old now,—young WALTER WHEATEAR of Rockferry Farm. To all appearances she might as well have adored Mount Athos, or worshipped Arthur's Seat.

"PSYCHE," said her Mother, "I believe it is all the result of Science, and Socialism, and Statistics, and things,—especially those horrid Statistics, which seem to me to upset everything, and which I think are most wicked and impious, besides being so shockingly dry and boring. The world went very well before your GOSCHEN and GIFFENS went in for tabulating everything, from heart-throbs to corn-imports, from Unemployed averages to the Marriage-rate."

"Well, HYMEN is the chief of the Unemployed now, Mamma, at any rate," moaned the Lady PSYCHE.

"How can you joke on such a serious subject, PSYCHE?" cried the elder lady, flouncing impatiently away.

"If Statistics have done it all," sighed Lady PSYCHE, "I only wish they were tied round Mr. GOSCHEN's neck and cast into the—"

"Nothing of the sort, my poor girl," answered a honey-toned voice. It came from a handsome youth who—in November—might have been taken for a sort of glorified link-boy, though more lightly clad than that function in that season might seem to demand.

"Oh, you have returned, then?" cried Lady PSYCHE, recognising him instantly. Where have you been hiding yourself?"
"I've been studying Fair Trade with HOWARD VINCENT," answered HYMEN.

"The wretch!" ejaculated Lady PSYCHE, viciously. "I don't mean you," she hastened to explain, "but HOWARD VINCENT, for detaining you all this while in the interests of his most precious fad."

"You don't understand," said the youth, pityingly. "It is no fad, but a fatality. *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*. Of course you understand that. In the absence of Ceres and Bacchus, Venus grows cold. Without corn and wine, Love loses warmth. And as you've chosen to turn the cold shoulder upon Ceres, can you wonder if she has chilled towards you?"

"What do you mean?" cried Lady PSYCHE.

"Simply that wheat is at so absurdly low a figure, that it doesn't pay the British farmer any longer to produce it," answered HYMEN. "Verb. sap.!" And he vanished.

"Ceres, to thee belongs the votive lay,
Whose locks in radiance round thy temple play,"

sang the Lady PSYCHE WHEATEAR.

"They cannot play more radiantly round the goddess's temples than do yours round your rosy brow, PSYCHE," responded her adoring husband, fanning her fair flushed face (flushed with mingled love and August heat, as she bent over her baby's *berceuse*) with a copy of the *Mark Lane Gazette*.

"Hush! Whisper not a word of even comparative disparagement of the 'rich-haired daughter of Rhea,' or nobody knows what may happen," cried Lady PSYCHE. "She may get the hump—I mean, she may take well justified offence again, you know, WALTER, and then the price of corn will come down, and the marriage-rate with it, and GLADSTONE—gr-r-r!—may come back, and HOWARD VINCENT and HYMEN go way again, and Free Trade and Universal Spinsterhood be re-established, and the Cobden Club be set up again, and the 'Cheap Loaf' heresy spread once more, and that omnivorous ogre,



"ALL OVER THE PLACE!" OR, MR. GLADSTONE'S DREAM IN FLORENCE.

"the Consumer," consume Corn, and consequently Connubiality, off the face of the (English) earth, and—"

"Hush, hush, do hush!" interjected the shocked Gentleman Farmer. "Strange, darling," he added, musingly, "that there should be so close a relationship between Husbandry (of one sort), and Husbandry (of another)! Fancy Mankind being willing to sacrifice Matrimony to such things as Cheap Food, Statistics, and Economic Orthodoxy!"

"Womankind never was!" interposed PSYCHE. "Which shows how much wiser we women are than you men."

"Women," smiled the uxorious WHEATEAR, "are, after all, our greatest 'staple,' our most important 'interests,' our most valuable 'commodity,' our most inexhaustible 'resources'."

"Stay," cried his wife, archly. "Hardly 'inexhaustible.'"

"How not?" queried the mystified WHEATEAR.

"Why," responded PSYCHE, "because great resources as they certainly are, they are resources which require to be husbanded!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the enamoured one, exuberantly. "My PSYCHE, after all, is the only true Economist!"

PLAYED OUT.

THE AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN, being mortally afraid of an ultimate English occupation of his country, has had before him various plans by which he can make sure of keeping the dreaded invader out. Among the suggestions submitted to him were:—

1. To import Mr. MICHAEL DAVITT, Mr. DILLON, and other eminent Irish Home-Eulers, and get them to take up their residence at Cabul. 2. To start a Christmas Day once a month. 3. To start an Income-Tax-collection once a week. 4. To ask a colony of hurdy-gurdy players to set up in his dominions. 5. To have a Cabul Puddle Muddle Gazette. 6. To represent Afghanistan as a second and rather worse Burmah. And 7, to introduce the Scotch bagpipes to his people.

Here is a chance for distressed Crofters! What a rush there will be to MAC ABDULRHAMAN!

SWEETS AND BITTERS.—Mrs. RAM says she understands the Sugar Bounties to mean a bolus on the exportation of sugar.

OUR DEBATING CLUB.

An Evening of Incident—Duff wounds Cockbull's feelings—The Hon. Sec. proves his acquaintance with the Rules—the Debate is brought to a close in an unprecedented manner.

It is just about a year ago that one of our meetings was attended, not only by most of the regular members, but also by an incident of so startling and unusual a nature, that we are all of us a little shy of alluding to it, even now.

The motion we were discussing was one which ever possesses a strong fascination for the more speculative order of mind, being to this effect: "That this House is strongly of opinion that the existence of what are vulgarly known as 'Ghosts' is sufficiently established by credible testimony to be accepted as a positive fact."

COCKBULL, who proposed the motion, after a most eloquent and exhaustive speech lasting over three-quarters of an hour, and freely punctuated towards its close by the President's bell, concluded thus: "And now, Sir, as far as was possible in the limits afforded me"—("ping-ping" from the bell)—"I have quoted, I think, every instance of a supernatural appearance recorded since mankind first began to observe these phenomena with any attention." (This was no idle boast; the number and variety of COCKBULL'S cases, and the masterly manner in which he narrated them, had reduced almost every Gargoyles to a condition of "gooseflesh" and erected hair.) "I have also mentioned a striking experience of a female member of my own family." ("Ping-ping.") "I shall be very little longer, Mr. President. Without having the presumption to suppose that the few and feeble"—("No, no!" and another faint "ping")—"I repeat, the few and feeble words I have uttered to-night will have had the effect of proving Ghosts absolutely up to the hilt—I do venture to think that I have succeeded in setting Spectres up before you to-night as solid facts, deserving of our earnest, our reverent, and philosophical attention and support. I do presume to believe"—("ping-ping-ping!")—"I have just done, Sir—that the Hon. Member who is down to follow me to-night will find it less easy than he imagines to demolish, discredit, and explode a thing so rooted and intertwined with our most cherished prejudices and traditions as what, to use the terms of my motion, is 'vulgarly known as a Ghost.'" (Enthusiastic applause.)

PLUMLEY DUFF, who had undertaken to oppose, got up with an offensive assumption of bringing the discussion down to a matter-of-fact level. DUFF is a good fellow, but he doesn't seem to know when he is utterly out of touch with the general sympathy of the meeting.

"The Hon. Gentleman," began DUFF (with the heavy humour he employs at times), "says he doesn't believe I shall find it easy to explode one of his ghosts." (It was so like DUFF to fasten on a verbal expression of that sort—but we never consider this fair argument). "No more do I. Let him bring me a ghost, and then, if the thing will oblige me by remaining long enough to give me time to strike a light, I don't mind attempting—for the Hon. Gentleman's satisfaction—to ignite the gas, of which I should expect to find it largely composed." (A slight movement of distant among several Gargoyles at this ponderous flippancy.) "I don't think I risk much in making this offer, and I'll tell you why,—I haven't the slightest belief in any such rubbish." (Here a sharp rap sounded from the middle of the table, just in front of him, and the President called "Order," with a slight frown.) "We've been told to-night of ghosts that moaned, and warned, and beat drums, and threw furniture about, and other gymnastics of the kind—but what I want to know is—what do they do it with? What is a ghost, after all, according to the evidence? A gauzy, cobwebby affair, like an old veil. People tell us they have looked through them, and noticed no internal apparatus, nothing of what you may call 'works' of any sort or description. Very well—but you can't make even such a simple observation as 'good evening'—to say nothing of uttering a long and complicated warning—you can't so much as groan, without a complete set of vocal cords, in fair working order. You can't beat a drum, or pitch chairs at people's heads, without muscles. ("Rap-rap-rap!" on the table again.) "I must really ask Honourable Gargoyles in my immediate neighbourhood not to play the fool." (Sensation, and warm disclaimers from several Members, who, I may here state, were quite incapable of such an action.) "If you want to go anywhere, and see anybody, you must exercise some sort of volition, and, to exercise volition, a brain (I don't say a powerful brain, because I never heard of any ghost who gave any sign of even average mental power), but some brain is indispensable. How do you get all that in a few feet of film? No, no, Gentlemen—it won't do. We can't have Mr. COCKBULL coming his ghosts over us. Then he tells us a long rigmarole—I do not use the term in an offensive sense, but it was long, and it was a rigmarole—he tells a long rigmarole about what an aunt of his by marriage once saw, or believed she saw! Gentlemen, he should have brought her down here"—(four very loud raps—at which even DUFF started)—"to tell us her adventure in person, and then we should know what to think."

Here there was quite a scene; COCKBULL sprang up, quivering with emotion.

"I appeal to you, Mr. President," he said, "whether I am to be subjected to these unseemly taunts! It is extremely painful to me to explain that the reason why I am unable to bring my relative here to-night, is, that," (here his voice broke)—"she—she is no more. She was my great-great-aunt, and expired in the latter part of last century."

A murmur of sympathy with him, and marked disapproval of DUFF, after which PINCENY said: "Order, please. Mr. PLUMLEY DUFF, I think it is not advisable to drag any member's deceased relatives into this debate—they are scarcely relevant."

At this, FADDELL rose, with a copy of the Rules: "I am very reluctant to challenge your ruling, my lad—I mean, Sir—but may I draw your attention to Rule 53, sub-section (b):—"A remark is relevant, if it refers to a statement by a previous speaker, which the President has not at the time declared to be itself irrelevant." I submit, Sir, with all respect, that, as you did not rule the Proposer's Aunt out at the time, Mr. DUFF was perfectly in order in referring to her."

[Outcry, and "Shut up!" from one much excited Gargoyles.

"Well," said PINCENY, coldly (considering FADDELL a nuisance—which, to be candid, he occasionally is), "Go on, Mr. DUFF."

[Here a perfect shower of angry raps proceeded from the table, actually upsetting some of the ink, and spirits-and-water; several members drew back their chairs and looked pale and uncomfortable.

"I—I will just say something on the question of ghosts' clothes," said DUFF (one resounding bang lower down the table, after which we all glanced at one another, meaningly), "but—but after that expression of opinion, I—I will sit down. . . I should like, before I do so, to assure the Hon. Proposer of my deep sympathy with him in a bereavement to which, had I known it earlier, I should not have permitted myself an allusion." ("Hear! Hear!")

After this, we sat for some time in awed silence; little BOSHER was the first man with presence of mind enough to look under the table, but he reported that he saw nothing but the ordinary number of members' legs. We were all proceeding to satisfy ourselves of this personally, when we were brought up again by a fresh phenomenon—a tremendous blow, at the door this time. Poor BOSHER, who sat with his back within a couple of feet or so from the door, grew almost hysterical, and I am not ashamed to admit that, none of us liked to go and open it; we knew that the outer door was securely fastened, and that it was, humanly speaking, impossible for any living creature to be in the ante-chamber at that particular moment. HARTUP suggested that DUFF should go—but DUFF retorted that he was not expecting any aunt just then, so the matter dropped, and GEYSER rose a little later in evident emotion.

"Gentlemen," said GEYSER, "we have had a warning to-night against being led away by the pride of intellect. If—if there be really among us this evening, some invisible spectator from across the Threshold—do not let us afford it—her—the indignity and the pain of being present while her very existence is being exposed to ignorant and irreverent scepticism, such as" (with a reproachful look at DUFF, who was wiping his forehead) "we have heard so recently. Do not let us tempt, by a further parade of incredulity some manifestation, which the nerves of some of us" (with a glance at BOSHER, who was obviously much upset) "might find too great a strain for the intellect to bear. I propose, Sir, that we proceed to a vote at once, without further discussion."

[Loud applause, led in a ghastly manner by the door.

Well, we did proceed to a division, with the result that fifteen voted for the motion, and none against it. DUFF declined to give a vote one way or the other, having ascertained from the Secretary that nothing in the Rules compelled him to support his speech by the ballot.

Then we broke up in a subdued manner, and our awe was intensified, if anything, by discovering that the door of the ante-chamber was locked as usual, and that no one was secreted in any part of the passage. A strange circumstance, which BOSHER, for some reason, did not seem to consider as having any direct connection with the other manifestations, was that a long, and very handsome ebony stick of mine, with a large round apple of agate at the top, was, to the best of my belief, certainly not in the place where I can almost swear to have deposited it on entering! BOSHER advised me not to mention this, as, owing to my being unable to speak quite positively on the point, critics might consider it the weakest part of the case. It amuses me now to think how calmly and philosophically BOSHER could talk—after it was all over. He was anything but calm and philosophical at the time!

ARE there two Baddeley Cakes? On Twelfth Night, last Friday, both Drury Lane and Covent Garden cut "the Baddeley Cake," and each Baddeley Cake was welcomed by a Goodly assembly. No special costumes were worn, and no one was Baddeley dressed.

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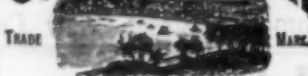
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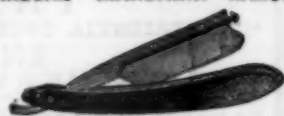
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